

Homelessness A slice of life venture

Incessantly gnawing at our reaction emphatic
Homelessness is mindless and so pathetic
Some think it was discovered on an island in
the pacific
Or maybe in Africa where it's more prolific
Savage elements of nature's design
Where storms unleash havoc on global entities
benign
Devastation and war's displacement
Vile behaviors of human debasement
Endemic struggles prevail.
Where ravenous greed prevails
Homeless details

Degrees of Homelessness encompassing the
world around
Where travesty is found
Parallels of homelessness abound
Surrealist artist would portray it as a scream
But to the homeless it's very real

In our midst it should not be tolerated
In winters as horrid as ours
It must be eradicated.

Pro-active folks in their songs berate it:
Homelessness is a terrible dirge

Homelessness – We must end that scourge!
Homelessness is multifaceted:
A blistered face exposed as a carpet unravels
a family's nightly repose.
A chilled hand begging bold
To escape the cold
A covert faceless fiend encountered by a vic-
tim seeking shelter.
A wonton street corner's derelict plea for
small change, "please Madam"
Then Homelessness stacks coins in frustration
at the fast-food restaurant
It smiles in elation for the privilege of this eco-
nomic empowerment

On a freezing night with winds relentless
Homelessness is a plea for a blanket
To enshroud a visage diminished by winter's
torrid gauntlet
Then Homelessness cowers in astonishment at
a stranger's admonishment
To venture to solve Homelessness by making it
a public debenture

We can't have it here not in our midst
No, not in our cities in a great country like
this.

By Daphne S. Raubenheimer

Subject: Thanksgiving Proclamation

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

God brought us into existence and
endowed us with millions of blessings. God
blessed us with uncountable sorts of eatables,
provided us with countless goods / opportuni-
ties of comfort, luxury, adornment and enter-
tainment so that we could enjoy a comfortable
life.

As there is no order greater than that of
God, therefore we should get a complete knowl-
edge of His directives and resolve to spend our
life according to His will, and we should not
follow the path forbidden by Him.

And we should be thankful to God for each
moment we live on this earth for the countless
blessings He has showered on us.

S.A.Rehman(Peace Activist)PAKISTAN

Arab Spring

Pain-wracked bodies submit
to hearts now stilled;
Immortal souls set free,
yet still beseeching love.

Pain-wracked bodies despoiled
by a tyrant's hand.
Our cries so oft repeated
go silently unheeded.

Some, we know yet hear
our plaintive cry: These,
our fellow brethren for
truth stand up to die.

Truth's clarion call
will not be stilled.
Th' oppressor, with his
evil ways, will fall.

bwfaithministry

Alberta Street News

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Alberta STREET NEWS

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Mission

Edmonton Street News Society provides a voice, employment and social support to those who need these, and communicates perspectives dealing with poverty and social justice, by education and communication activities, including publishing a street newspaper

Values/Beliefs/Guiding Principles

We believe in being inclusive and encouraging
We believe that human rights are fundamental to living together
We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to earn and control their money
We believe in journalistic and organizational professionalism and integrity
We believe the public needs to know about issues around poverty and social justice
We value community and connecting with others
We value passion and determination
We believe everyone deserves the opportunity to learn, develop and use communication skills

The views presented in this publication are those of the writers.

Editorial

In 1914, Robert Frost, the American poet, published a poem that has been used by writers and politicians (usually small and large "c" conservatives) who see caring for society's less fortunate members as an unreasonable burden.

"Home is the place where, when you have to go there," Frost wrote, "They have to take you in."

The words "have to" are significant: they imply obligation and resentment, not generosity. They are spoken by a New England farmer out of frustration. A former hired hand has returned unwelcome to the farm where he once worked. The man is old, cantankerous, barely able to work, and disloyal: he had left during the busy haying season, presumably for a bit more money. Now he has returned in winter seeking warmth and shelter.

The farmer's wife senses the truth: the old man "has come home to die."

The farmer scoffs: "It all depends on what you mean by home." In fact the man means no more to the couple than a stray dog who wanders into the yard. He then speaks the words that have become a mantra for so many ungenerous, uncaring generations.

The lines that follow, spoken by the farmer's wife, are seldom quoted: "I should have called it / Something you somehow haven't to deserve."

The wife understands that a home—not a mansion, but a safe place to live and take care of basic needs—is a basic necessity, a right: what we would now call a human right. It is something none of us should ever have to deserve; something none of us should ever have to beg for.

That brief exchange in a short poem captures, as well as any few words ever have, the debate between those who believe having a home is a privilege and those who believe it is a right.

We side with the wife. Having a home is a right. And we believe that, when jurisdictions all over the world and Canada are preaching

austerity, it is time for us, in sober generosity and goodwill to stand up for that right.

Should every Canadian have a home? There is only one just answer: yes, not housing, not a shelter, but a home.

Does that mean the sky's the limit? That everyone should have everything they want? Of course not.

There was a time, not so long ago, when 800 square feet, without a garage, was the standard, viable starter home in Edmonton. Then it became 1,200 square feet, with a single garage. Next it was 2,000 or more square feet, with a double garage. Now 3,000 square feet, with space for three or four cars is not uncommon. And sadly, it is now more profitable for builders to cater exclusively to demand for extravagant properties (not

homes, any more, but properties), and for neighbourhoods of such mini-mansions to restrict the construction of modest, practical homes in order to protect property values.

At the same time, Edmonton's legacy of small, humble homes in older neighbourhoods is being demolished through gentrification and to make way for bigger, amenity-filled, expensive condos that are beyond the means of the people who live in the original home.

It's a mad way to plan a city, but that's the treadmill we seem to be on. Governments at all levels have said for years that the market can take care of all needs. It is clear that the market cannot, and does not want to.

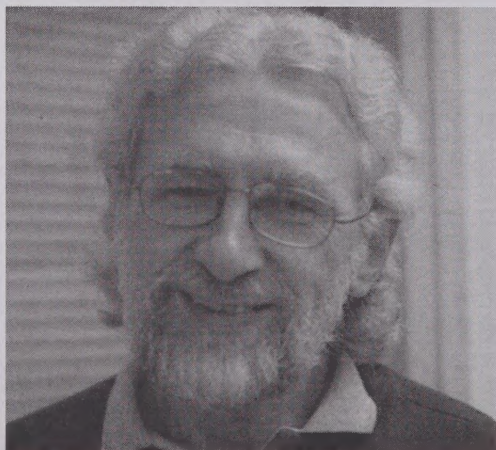
In fact, it seems that governments today do everything they can to enable the market to emphasize extravagant and expensive at the expense of the modest, practical and necessary.

We have listened to the farmer and his spiritless descendants for too long. They are taking us to a dark, inhumane place. It's time to listen to the wife.

ASN staff

It's time to listen to the wife.

Letter to the editor



From the perspective of having been a "street pastor" for over 15 years in Edmonton's inner city I would like to tell what I've experienced and how it helps to prevent violence.

Since the family is the basic unit of both society and the universal church, everyone

needs at least one person who loves him or her unconditionally. I am someone who has adopted numerous people into his "street family" and given food and shelter to over two hundred people in the past fifteen years. I value the trust people give me, and help meet people's basic needs. Directing people to where they can get good food and shelter helps them more than giving change, I feel, and I have found it rewarding to give beggars fruits, nuts or chocolates, as well as health drinks.

My perspective is that I believe all of us are either part of the Kingdom of love and light or are part of the world's problem. I believe what Saint Paul said: "All things work for good to those who love God ... and are fitting into his plans". (Romans chapter 8 verse 28 LB)

I'm presently retired (age 63) from being a "street pastor" for health reasons. but I'll give anyone a list of places for food and shelter. My number is (780)263-2901.

by Peter Pedro Hans Schults

Hear me roar

Last month, the Parkland Institute, together with the Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW), released an information brief entitled "Women's equality is a long way off in Alberta". The short, yet powerful document, outlined a number of key dimensions exposing and explaining the ongoing presence of gender based inequality in Alberta. Items given consideration in the brief included the fact that our province's wage gap is still among the biggest in the country – in 2009 the median full year, full time earnings of women in Alberta was 68% of that of men. (And for foreign-born women, it is even worse, falling to an abysmal 56%).

Additionally, the document presented ample evidence clearly showing that women's workforce participation is significantly low wage and part-time (due, in part, to the social construction of family responsibilities). We just to have a quick look at the make-up of the service sector – and the risible two-tier minimum wage – for easily accessible examples of that gendered stratification. As stated by the Institute and the ACSW "Relative to the rest of Canada, men in Alberta are much more likely to see the fruits of Alberta's economic wealth reflected in their wages than are women".

Taken together this leads to one main conclusion. As noted by the Women's Centre in Calgary the basic fact is that "you're more likely to be poor if you're a woman." And there it is. Sometimes you can't sugar coat things. Sometimes you just need to be honest. And sometimes you just have to act.

But despite the truth voiced repeatedly by the Women's Centre, there is little policy attention to the ongoing economic marginalization of women. There is little political will to concretely address the needs of women, particularly working class women. There is little evidence that the politicians want to say "yes" to the necessary economic and social initiatives that could significantly improve the lives of girls and women. It seems that they don't want to act.

Norquest College students experience a night on the street

Social work students from Norquest College experienced a night of homelessness and raised money to help homeless youth. Friday, March 9, 19 students brought their sleeping bags, and lay cardboard on the cement on the south side of Norquest College to spend the night sleeping outside.

Kim Blair, a second year social work student, said, "One way or another everyone in the class participated. We are using boxes to lie on and everybody has a sleeping bag. Everyone brought a bag lunch. It's turning out to be quite the event. We had a goal of \$14,000 and we surpassed that.

Students raised a total of \$25,000 for the Youth Emergency Shelter, and brought donations of food for the Edmonton Food Bank and clothing for the Candora Society.

Norquest College instructor Bob Marvin said, "This is a class project to identify an activity to celebrate social work. The students generated the idea of homelessness. We want to be respectful of the homeless. We're having speakers coming throughout the evening to share with the class."

Speakers, who came out to share from their different perspectives on homelessness, included representatives from Edmonton Food Bank, Elizabeth House, the Hope Mission/Herb Jamieson, the Hope Mission van, the Edmonton City Police, Inner City Youth Housing and the ACSW.

Photo and story by Linda Dumont

Take for example the issue of the funding of childcare programs. In Progressive Conservative circles there is actual horror that people would propose the development and funding of a province-wide quality, affordable and developmentally appropriate childcare program. They say, "This would

Women's equality is a long way off in Alberta

never fly in Alberta". They also trot out the assertion that most women want to stay home with their children; granted, this may be true in the abstract, but it is not a realistic economic option for many families. But those in power (many of whom have nannies, money and choices) often fail to recognize the practical realities of many women, and their narrow-minded, blinkered and ideological responses to the unmet needs of women lead to ongoing marginalization.

I know this point will annoy some of my gentle readers, but Quebec has a low-cost, province wide childcare program. Now I certainly don't want to suggest that it is ideal and there can be problems. But, as a whole, such a program not only supports the choices of women in terms of self-actualization and labour market participation, but it also provides more flexibility in terms of meeting and confronting the demands of that labour market participation – which has obvious

benefits to a woman and her family. And, the fact is that although there is still a wage gap, women in Quebec make 85% of men's earnings; not good but patently better. Such a program can also help in terms of the healthy early development of a child. It certainly seems worthy of consideration; but the policy makers and politicians will not say "yes". So, "yes", poverty then continues as a women's issue.

March 5th marked International Women's Day. I attended a conference put on the by Calgary Immigrant Women's Association. The Conference featured a panel of speakers, talking about a wide range of experiences. It was quite stirring. It pointed to the realities of gender as a variable of oppression, intersecting with class and race. But that was just one day – for the girls and women in our lives, we need to act for the implementation of progressive social change and inclusion during the other 364 days. And this action must be comprehensive in nature – because there is no one "big idea" that will solve this problem. We have to explore childcare, educational opportunities, the Living Wage, domestic violence, homelessness, the Guaranteed Income Supplement, a provincial child benefit and vocational training...among other factors!

At root, we need to look at poverty – and the various solutions – using a gendered lens because, sadly, it is still a man's world.

By Timothy Wild, Calgary

She wanted to make a difference

Being an editor of a street paper, Kate learned much. She started interviewing the homeless, listening to their stories. Some days, she'd arrive home in tears from these broken men and women. One incident stayed with her constantly, a gentleman who was homeless told her his story.

Once, he was rich with a job making enough money to supporting a family of four times then were good. Then, a gambling addiction over took his life. It was so bad that the wife and kids moved out. His friends tried to make him realize his addiction with gambling. He wouldn't listen. He then rented an apartment. He was facing bankruptcy, losing every thing he owned.

by Marie Joki

Karim

Karim Leauconi came from Uganda in Africa when he was very young. His whole family had to learn English. Karim, being so young, had no trouble learning English but his parents had problems learning. They registered in Changing Together, where immigrants learn the language. Karim was eager to learn and soon he had lots of friends. He completed high school, then went for training with the CNIB, an agency for the blind, to work in a gift shop in a hospital. I worked with him and I helped him. I was happy for him when he took a computer course. He worked in gift shops but wanted to learn the computer. Eventually he began working for the Alberta government. During this time he married and he had a son named Shakeel. Karim now has a guide dog called Sutro. This seeing eye dog is so friendly and gentle that he knows when Karim is having a bad day; the guide dogs seem to have an extra sense. Good luck Karim in your endeavours.

By Marie Joki



Photo: Kim Blair, a second year social work student, was one of the students who spent the night outside.

Does NIMBY live in McCauley?



When he first took office in 2004, Mayor Mandel offered a creative approach to what was already a serious housing shortage: build affordable homes on abandoned school properties in and near downtown. Not one such project was built. The concept is not discussed any more; even a sympathetic mayor and councillors can read negative messages.

Whenever anyone talked of a possible housing project for a school site, communities protested vigorously: the value of nearby properties would fall; low-income neighbours would attract crime.

Fast forward to March this year, when an Alberta Appeal Court judge overruled a city permit for a supportive living apartment building in the McCauley community. Ambrose Place was to be a 42-unit complex for hard-to-house couples and singles (meaning marginal people with addictions, mental health and behavioural baggage). Now the project is in limbo.

The judge ruled the city had not given the community adequate notice of approval hearings, in effect slipping the proposal through a procedural back door. The community also argued that the area is zoned for apartments, while the project is really a medical facility. Talk of property values and crime and violence is on the agenda or in the background.

There are few options on the table. The city might buy the building and adapt it for tenants who are acceptable to the community. Or the building could be demolished. In either case, the people who might have lived there will remain on the streets.

What a waste.

The proposal from NiGiNan Housing Ventures (available on line at tinyurl.com/76zvtsr) is a model of its kind: clear, concise, focused. The eight proponents, all of them women, have unimpeachable experience and qualifications in fields related to the needs and challenges of potential residents. To read the proposal is to understand what needs to be done and how to do it sensitively and effectively. The proposal touches all the necessary bases, except one: support from people who live and work in McCauley.

Why did experts make such a "rookie" mistake? One likely reason: fear that the community would object.

Why did the city decide or agree not to follow standard approvals process? Probably for a similar reason. And with this newspaper and other more powerful critics often insisting it do more for its homeless and vulnerable citizens, the city may have viewed NiGiNan's proposal as manna from heaven and tried to squeeze it through. Understandable, but misguided.

As citizens and human beings, we now face some hard questions and discussions.

Should we abandon a necessary facility that is ideally designed for its purpose—and the women and men who might live there, in security and with adequate care they desperately need?

Or should we abandon the McCauley community and somehow force residents to accept another thankless burden?

We must resist such either/or rhetoric.

McCauley already does far more than its fair share for Edmonton's homeless and vulnerable citizens. One of the saddest—and most infuriating—responses to the court's decision was a rush by some people (who do not live in or near McCauley), to brand community opposition as not-in-my-back-yard (NIMBY) behaviour—a "triumph of NIMBY," as one Twitter poster I follow put it.



We learned that the people who would live at Ambrose Place are neither criminal nor violent. They are victims, not perpetrators.

How outrageous! How self-righteous!

Some who cry "NIMBY" are genuinely concerned about the welfare of potential residents of Ambrose Place and do not want to have them lose an opportunity. But I have no doubt that many, maybe most, of the finger-pointers have motives that are more selfish. They would never ever allow an Ambrose Place to be built in their own backyards. Some of them probably live in neighbourhoods that shot down Mayor Mandel's proposal for low-income family housing on unused school lands. Some of them probably live in the urban deserts that have sprung up on our city's fringes, where they isolate themselves from uncomfortable downtown realities with walls, gates, and distance;

where they can bury their heads, hearts and consciences in sands of indifference and irresponsibility.

Ambrose Place should be finished and put to its intended use. Hard-to-house citizens must not be ignored or taken for granted, however badly the project may have been managed.

And McCauley needs something, in fact a lot, in return, if the project is resumed. Residents' needs and concerns must be acknowledged and accommodated.

There is bitter irony in the fact that, as we continue to ask McCauley to open its backyard to Edmonton's neediest citizens (and shame residents when they fight back) the city closes schools and other amenities residents desperately need to hold their community together. McCauley, too, must no longer be ignored or taken for granted.

Surely things can be done to offset what residents see as the burden of Ambrose Place and serious needs that have accumulated in McCauley over the years, due to long-term insensitive planning and policies. The city and the community must identify those things and do them.

Our editor, Linda Dumont, has lived in McCauley for years.

But because some of us at ASN live in McCauley and all of us interact with the community, we understand that the people who would live at Ambrose Place already live in the neighbourhood. Some are homeless. Others sleep in shelters or couch surf but otherwise live on the streets. You see them every day: in parks and bus shelters; hanging out by the Boyle McCauley Health Centre and the Mustard Seed; sitting on church steps; drinking in back alleys; wandering the streets, threatening by their presence. The reason you see them is that they do not have homes. Even when they have temporary housing or shelter, they do not have homes: they have nowhere to go, and nothing to do for most of each day. Aborting Ambrose Place will not get rid of them: it will ensure that they stay on the streets, where they are now.

Talk to people at Urban Manor, a supportive living residence that serves a similar clientele in the Boyle Street community. Talk to the community policing team responsible for Boyle Street, McCauley, McDougall and Queen Mary Park neighbourhoods. ASN has done that research. We learned that the people who would live at Ambrose Place are neither criminal nor violent. They are victims, not perpetrators. If they seem associated with crime or violence, it is because they are easy pickings for many kinds of abuse; criminals and violent people seek them out. Give them secure homes; give them adequate care and support, and they and you will be safer.

A closing note to all the NIMBY-fingered critics of the McCauley community: our so-called "hard-to-house" neighbours are not on the streets because they want to be there, creating nuisances because that is what they want to do. They are there because we—not just the city, not just the province or federal government, but all of us—want them to be there. If we did not want homeless and vulnerable men and women living on our streets, they would not be there: they would have modest homes and simple lives of dignity in every part of the city, including your community. You shame yourselves, not the residents of McCauley, by attacking them for doing what you would certainly do (or may have already done many times) in your own backyard.

By Allan Sheppard

Red Carpet Affair 2012 successfully raises money for people with spinal cord injury and the disabled

The 9th annual Red Carpet Affair 2012 was hosted by the Canadian Paraplegic Association (Alberta) on Friday March 16th at the Shaw Conference Centre in Hall D in Edmonton, Alberta. The fundraising event was a gala combined with an awards night, live and silent auction. The event started at 6 p.m. offering a wine reception followed by dinner and desert. The event's presentations commenced at 7 p.m. with hundreds of people, mostly from the corporate sector, seated at dinner tables of eight for which they paid \$1200, listening to the speakers sharing about their personal struggles with spinal cord injury and other disabilities.

Those unique and courageous people were also there to receive their distinctive awards for the immense impact they've had on other people while serving in various capacities, supporting and helping people living with spinal cord injury (SCI). Hosting the event for the evening gala was CTV television news anchor and MC Carrie Doll. The event opened with grace delivered by Vahen King. A video presentation showing from four gigantic video screens on the top walls of Hall D showcased a variety of documentaries featuring people in the spinal cord community who've risen above their spinal cord injury issues while prospering through supportive programs that assist them to live a healthier and happier quality of life. The two videos included the Alberta SCI Initiative Impacting Lives through Collaboration and Getting Active with Your Support.

Carrie Doll gave her insight from data released by the CPA on statistics impacting people living with spinal cord injury. Doll said, "Since 1961 the Canadian Paraplegic Association (CPA) has grown from a team of three to a staff of fifty with many volunteers working out of 10 locations in our province. 60% of staff have personal experience living with disabilities. Staff and volunteers support persons with spinal cord injuries and other physical disabilities to adjust to living with mobility challenges and to overcome the barriers that they may experience in their communities. They also work to identify and eliminate the environmental and attitudinal barriers faced by their clients in their communities."

In 2011 CPA conducted 67 community accessibility surveys. They found 150 new individuals and their families that were impacted by a spinal cord injury out of more than 4,000 individuals that CPA called at Alberta homes. MC Carrie Doll took some time out in recognizing a variety of VIP's, getting them to stand up briefly from their sponsor tables. Some of the many included former Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach and his wife Marie, Edmonton Centre MP Laurie Hawn, Edmonton Whitemud MLA Dave Hancock, Ward 12 City Councillor Amarjeet Sohi, honorary chair of the gala Dr. Robert D. Steadward, gala sponsor James H. Brown, Leduc Mayor Greg Krischke, Grande Prairie Mayor Bill Given and Ross of the Edmonton wheelchair basket ball team.

The awards presentation started right after a live auction hosted by auctioneer Dean Edge. The awards given out were a way of recognizing members of the spinal cord injury community for their selfless contributions in helping to make a difference for people living with either quadriplegia or paraplegia and other disabilities. Awards recipients included the Grande Prairie Aquatic and Wellness Multiplex that received the Percy Wickman Accessibility Award presented by Ceira and Jayden Wickman, Ken Thomas, who lives with cerebral palsy was awarded the Honourable Lois Hole Community Development Award presented by Jim Hole, Vance Milligan, living with spinal cord injury, received the Gary McPherson Lifetime Achievement Award presented by Dr. Robert D. Steadward and Mark Zupan, living with quadriplegia, a star of the Academy Award nominated film documentary, Murderball and a gold and bronze medal winning Paralympian for quad wheelchair rugby, received the Christopher Reeve Award presented by former Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach and his wife Marie.

During one of the four awards presented to those valuable recipients, CTV's MC Carrie Doll read a heartfelt and funny acceptance speech on behalf of Ken Thomas whose work in the spinal cord community has touched those like himself in rising above adversity. Doll said, "They told me I have one minute to make this acceptance speech, before I get a hug. (audience laughs) I'm thrilled and so honoured that I'm the recipient of this year's Community Development Award. Why? I thought I did what I needed to do. I've really enjoyed participating in all five boards over the past 30 some years. I think I've learned a lot and have hopefully helped educate other board members on the desires and needs of persons with disabilities. Our main desire is to become fully integrated into the community. We've come along ways and have fifty years to each of these goals. Public transportation and public buildings are much more accessible now that the general public's perception and attitudes towards persons with disabilities has improved immensely. We have come a long way, but there is still lots of work to be done in the future to achieve full participation and full integration. It is time for the younger generation to start getting involved in community and provincial boards and policies to make sure we seniors can stay living in our homes in our community until we kick the bucket. (audience erupts in laughter) and are not put back into institutions in the coming years. I'd like to announce that I have decided that my newest bucket list is to never run as Alberta's first dictator in the upcoming provincial elections (audience laughs) Ladies and gentlemen, Ken Thomas." applause.

Mark Zupan is 36. He is a civil engineer currently living in Austin Texas. Zupan rose to international fame in the Academy Award nominated film documentary Murderball and other notable works. He's also a Paralympian quad rugby wheelchair athlete who won a bronze medal at the Athens summer Paralympics in 2004 and a gold medal at the Beijing Games in 2008. His story is one of near tragedy and rising above adversity. In October of 1993, at the age of 18, right after a college soccer game, Mark and his teammates decided on celebrating in a bar in Florida. After having one too many to drink, the young teenager decided to go for a sleep in the back of his friend, Chris Igoo's pickup truck. When his friend, the owner of the truck, left the bar to go back to his truck, he wasn't aware that Mark was already asleep in the back. Driving while intoxicated, Igoo drove some distance, then he lost control of his vehicle. Zupan was sent flying out of the back end over a fence sending him right into a canal where he spent 14 hours hanging onto a branch until a passerby rescued him. Zupan slipped into a hypothermic state and as a result of the accident ended up a quadriplegic.

The unfortunate tragedy that ended up placing him in a wheelchair for life, wasn't going to stop him from living to his fullest and achieving his dreams. For two and a half years he attended rehab, where he rebuilt himself mentally and physically. His discovery of wheelchair quad rugby opened a new door to a successful career as he earned recognition as a two-time quad rugby wheelchair national champion and was once chosen as the 2004 quad rugby player of the year.

Just prior to giving his story to the audience about how he rose above adversity and challenging others about the humorous stereotypes that have been occasionally thrown at him, Zupan took time out to give Alberta Street News an interview. When asked about trading in his old life for his newer one, Zupan said, "No, you've got to think about this. You have pretty much two choices. Do you want to live, or do you want to die. You could cash your chips right there and say, 'Screw it, I'm not doing this', but I mean I had to go on."

Despite all those successes, he'll always be thankful for the support he's received from the many organizations, friends and family that have helped him rise above his setback. Zupan said, "I've worked for everything in my life, and I have a good support system, great family, great friends that helped quite a bit. You know, you find new paths. You find new things that you want to do in life and you go for it."

When asked how he's handled judgement passed on him, he shared a story of his recent encounter with a mother and her son at a grocery check out till. Zupan said, "It's each to its own. There's going to be stereotypes. You look at somebody in a wheelchair. People go, 'Oh, I don't want to talk to you.' I'm going to get whatever it is you have. The best sounding board on that are kids. So you look at kids, who come up and they really don't care. It's like, 'Get out of your wheelbarrow. I want to play in it.' I was sitting in the grocery store line. I'm like, 'Oh crap, okay yeah.' His mom is saying, 'No, no, no!' His mom is like, what? Learn from your kid. Don't sit here and pre-judge me. You want me? Come and talk to me? You don't, take a hike. I don't want to deal with you. Kids are just raw and inquisitive. Adults are inquisitive, but they hide it and they sit and they stare."

Just before he left to go on stage as a special guest in giving his keynote speech to the audience he left his last message of goodwill and inspiration for Alberta Street News readers. Zupan said, "It's kind of cool. The thing is, you don't wake up and say, 'Hey, I want to be an inspiration. You live your life you know. That's what's cool about it. If people can take inspiration, take lessons from what I've experienced, awesome, because it makes their life easier. It makes my life easier. It makes my life fulfilled. I mean it's cool and a very humbling experience. If you say, 'Hey, I know you.' Is that a good thing, or is that a bad thing? But typically it works out well. So it's cool."

Zachary Weeks was also at the event. He lives with spastic quadriparetic cerebral palsy. He's had this condition since birth. He's a Canadian Paraplegic Association Development and Communications coordinator. His problems occurred when his mother was giving birth in the hospital. She was having contractions and they contractions were squeezing the little infant, cutting oxygen off in his brain, which caused oxygen deprivation. His doctor later diagnosed him as having spastic quadriparetic cerebral palsy.

In an interview with Alberta Street news, Weeks gave his views on how he helps to make a difference for spinal cord clients and the many other disabled persons who use his support in finding the proper resources for a healthier quality of life. Weeks said, "After someone sustains a spinal cord injury, obviously there need to be some modifications to their lifestyle. One of those would most definitely include their living arrangement. So here, CPA comes in providing the knowledge and the connections with the spinal cord injured with funding to get them out to vacations, and funding for their house, such as the ramp, their washrooms to provide bigger space now that they have a wheelchair, or a mobility aid. It doesn't have to be a wheelchair. It could be a scooter, or a rocker. So that is one of the many services that CPA offers."

Altogether \$115,000 was raised for programs, services and research for people living with Spinal cord injury. More than 500 guests attended and 30 volunteers helped support this unique event and helped to make it a success.



Murderball star Mark Zupan shared his story at the 9th annual Red Carpet Affair at the Shaw Conference Centre's.

Woof's Miracle

Teddy lies his big white head on my lap, his liquid brown eyes silently begging for affection. I stroke his soft white fur and his tail thumps the floor in appreciation. Absently, I continue to pat the big friendly Husky, but as always, my mind goes back to another dog, in other days, long ago but not forgotten. Only once in a lifetime comes a love like ours, that even now, years later, can haunt me to laughter or tears and leave me feeling strangely empty when the memory passes.

It all began when I was ten years old, and our dog, Cindy, was expecting her first litter of pups. One hot July day, as I was walking to the clothesline, I heard the faintest mewling noise coming from behind a dogberry bush. I expected to see a cat or a kitten lying there, as we had plenty of both, but there to my amazement was the tiniest, most beautiful puppy I had ever seen. His fur was a fuzzy reddish gold, and his muzzle was white with a white streak extending up the forehead. He reminded me of the pictures I had seen of collie dogs.

Gently, I picked him up and his little nose nuzzled my arm as he whimpered softly. As I carried him to the house, he let out a sneeze that sounded like a tiny "woof".

"That's what I'll call you then," I whispered near his tiny floppy ear, and Woof it was until the end of his days.

Dad was sure that Cindy had given birth to pups under the house, and that Woof was an unexpected early arrival. There was a crawl space under our house, perhaps eighteen inches high and earth floored. Through the one small opening in the side I edged in, crawling along on my stomach in the dirt; one hand holding a flashlight before me. The yellowed beam swung weakly in the gloom, then caught and held the glow from Cindy's eyes.

In joy I reached them, stroking the fuzzy warm bodies, burying my face in their sweet-smelling fur, and hearing their soft yips as they searched blindly for nipples.

"There must be a dozen of them," I called to Dad who was waiting at the entrance with Woof. As I placed Woof among the other puppies I shone the flashlight on each one. There were black ones, brown ones, black and white ones, even a grey one, but there was no other red-gold pup like my beautiful Woof.

Has any child known such joy as I did, the summer I was ten? Thirteen romping fuzzy puppies followed me wherever I went. I would cuddle them, carry them, kiss them, and roll over and over with them in the soft green grass. They loved to play tug-of-war and any stray rope or old rag would bring ferocious grs of delight as two pups tried to out-pull each other. My jeans were in tatters and my old coat had shredded sleeves from their tiny teeth, but I didn't care.

After milking time, Mom would separate the milk with a hand operated cream separator. The skim milk that ran from the spout always had several inches of foam on the top. I would skim this off with my hand and fill hubcaps of foam for my pups. They were so greedy. There would be foam on their ears and chins as they pushed to get closer to the dishes. When the foam was gone I would fill their bowls with skim milk and they would drink until their little bellies were round and hard.

All too soon, my pups were growing up

and it was time to put the ad in the paper to give them away. I knew there was no way we could keep them all, still I hated to part with even one. Back in school, I worried that Woof might be given away while I was gone, but he was always there, waiting for me when I got home. I soon realized I needn't have worried at all when a woman looking at the pups picked out Woof. "That's my daughter's dog," Dad said, "We're not giving him away."

Woof became my constant companion and special friend; the one I would tell all my secrets to, and he seemed to understand my feelings. Woof knew every hurt that I had ever borne. If I lay my head down on my knees and cried, he would press his muzzle against my face and make sad whining noises.

I was never sad long with Woof, for there were so many things we could play. We would climb to the top of the straw-stack mountain and I would jump near the edge until a section began to loosen, then go hurtling down on our straw slide in a laughing tangle of girl, and dog, and straw.



The summer holidays were such wonderful times for Woof and I. We would race to the slough, alive and ringing with the croaking of frogs, and run flinging our legs out and leaping high in the tall marsh grass. Sometimes we would walk deep in the woods looking for bird nests and berries. I was never afraid with Woof at my side and he was always there only a few steps away.

During the summer I would help Dad with the haying. Woof was always there sniffing around every wind-row of hay and poking his nose in every hole he could find in his search for mice. It was seldom he would catch one, but when he did he would throw it in the air, then catch and swallow it in a single gulp. "The poor mouse is probably squeaking in his stomach," Dad would say laughing.

I never really tried to teach Woof any tricks for our relationship was that of friend to friend rather than master and dog. He did learn to roll over and play dead though. I had only to touch him with a stick and say "bang" and Woof would roll over on his back, four legs straight in the air, his mouth gaping open.

Every night Woof would take up his post at the foot of my bed. I recall one spring day when it was very wet, and Mom said Woof was too muddy to come in. As Woof whined at the door, I filled the wash basin with water, then taking a cloth, I gently washed every paw. Mom and Dad exchanged smiles as I led Woof to my bedroom.

Woof had one bad habit, he was a car

chaser. It was an early fall day, the wind stinging with the promise of winter. The school bus came roaring down the hill, then slowed for my stop. Woof ran out barking excitedly, and the big black wheel hit him and spun him into the ditch. I don't know how long I stood there in shock, staring at Woof's still form. Dad came from somewhere and putting his big hands on my shoulders he turned me toward the house. "Sherry won't be going to school today" he said, "that was her dog." I vaguely remember the bus driver saying how sorry he was and Dad saying it was not his fault. For once in my young life I didn't care what anyone thought of me and I threw myself down beside Woof and wept bitterly. Mom brought an old blanket and together they began to carry Woof's body off the road.

"He's still alive," I heard Mom say, and a stab of pure joy sliced through me as I followed. Mom told me not to get my hopes up as he was probably badly hurt inside. Dad said half-heartedly that he really should be put out of his misery, but I knew he wouldn't do that. I clung to the saying that I heard my Dad say so many times, "where there is life, there is hope," and I began to pray for a miracle to keep my dog alive. They lay Woof on a blanket under the kitchen window, and Mom brought a quilt from her own bed and covered him up. I sat beside him, stroking him gently; watching for some sign that he truly was alive. Woof made no movement. His eyes remained closed, and the only sound was his shallow, ragged breath torturing me with hope.

At length, Mom brought me out some lunch and a chair for herself. She sat with me there, talking quietly, saying that it was probably best that Woof die, as he would be paralyzed for life. I knew she was trying to prepare me for Woof's death. I heard her words, but my inner being cried out: "No! He has to live! He has to live!"

Throughout the night I checked on Woof many times but he was always the same. I took courage in the thought that he was at least still alive. I was awakened by Dad's incredulous voice saying, "Well I'll be, that dog's still alive and he's awake." I was outside in a flash, stroking his red-gold head and speaking gently to him. Mom brought some warm milk and poured it slowly down his throat. It seemed like such an effort for him to swallow. It was painful to watch him struggle, with a task that had once been so easy for him. Woof searched my face with tortured, questioning eyes. He was unable to move, and I was unable to answer if he would ever walk again.

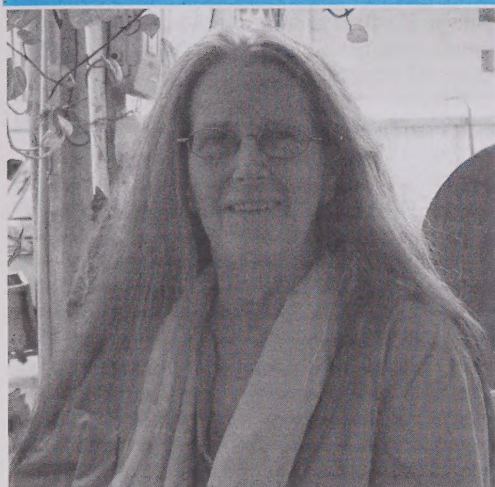
It was unheard of to call a veterinarian for a dog or a cat when I was a child on the farm. The veterinarian came once a year to inoculate the calves or pigs, or may be called if a prize cow was dying. Woof was on his own and his life was in peril.

Three days later Woof lifted his head onto trembling paws and struggled to a crouching position. His hind legs remained as lifeless as the dry leaves that blew about us there. I would hold him up carefully when he whined to relieve himself, then he would slump down again like a limp rag doll.

All my free time was spent with Woof and the days passed swiftly in a round of feeding

Continued on page 8

Dispatches from behind the poverty line



Namaste from India. I do the layout for Alberta Street News, and no, Linda has not off shored the job. I'm in India to get some long overdue dental work done. I'm a Canadian senior. I scrape by on a rather pitiful income that has me living in a travel trailer in BC. This is an RV park where 75% of the pads are occupied by full time residents, many of them seniors. I get by like everyone else, visiting local food banks and scrimping on propane heating fuel when the weather is cold. Pretty typical in BC. Think about that next time you cannot find a parking spot for your RV when you are traveling there.

Anyway, the toothaches and the broken teeth and the huge jaw abscesses and always having to eat soft food all got to be just too much. I saved for a year, scraped together enough cash to buy a one way ticket to India and to pay to stash all my bits and pieces except my beloved computer in a storage locker in Canada. Then I flew to India after Christmas. As good fortune would have it, Alberta Street News received a generous donation in January and Linda gave me a very rare honorarium that was enough to cover all my living expenses in India for the first month.

Three months into the trip I'm feeling much better. I'm living comfortably in very small rooms with minimal furniture, buying my food from fruit and vegetable vendors on the street outside my door and cooking it on my little hot plate, enjoying all the comforts of my Canadian lifestyle minus the cold drizzle

at a third the price. I can eat raw fruit and vegetables again, the sore jagged tooth fragments and abscesses are gone. I'm feeling healthier every day. I've saved almost enough for my flight back home and it looks like I'll have enough to get my partial redone and even get an implant to replace the molar that was yanked. The Canadian dollar buys almost 25% more rupees than it did my first visit. Bless India for dentistry a person can afford. Life is good.

Then my brother forwards me "the letter". It's from Services Canada. I quote:

"It has recently come to our attention that you are currently outside of Canada. You should be aware of the effect your absence may have on your benefit.

We will only pay the Supplement portion of your monthly payment for the month you leave and the following six months. If you do not return to live in Canada by the end of the six months, we will stop paying the supplement until you return. We require **official** confirmation of your dates of departure and return."

Then there are little boxes where you get Immigration to put their stamps and all sorts of regulations about who can "verify" your photocopies and warnings that smudged photocopies will not be acceptable. Guess that lets out my passport, those entry and exit stamps are always smudged.

This is my fourth trip to India, you would think by now they would realize I do come back.

When did Canada turn into the USSR or North Korea and start demanding citizens get exit stamps if they want to leave the country? Especially six weeks after they have left. Why is this condition not listed on their website?

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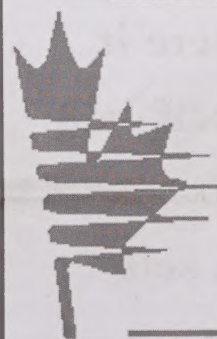


I'm also wondering how many senior snowbirds who fire up their RV's and head to Phoenix for the winter have to put up with this kind of harassment?

In addition, in order to get OAS, GIS and CPP I have to file income tax. I signed a copy and left it for my brother to fill in the numbers, do the math and mail it in when the T4 slips arrived, but Services Canada is not mailing the slips to the address I gave them. I'm left wondering if all my benefits will be canceled because I haven't sent in my Income Tax form on time? So back to Canadian style chronic insecurity. I can get back to Canada, but will I be able to pay for pad rental when I get there? Services Canada is notorious for stalling and delaying and losing documents when anyone appeals their behaviors. I'm dreading coming back to Canada already.

However, I am still enjoying keeping track of what is happening in my old hometown by helping put together this valuable little window on another kind of reality. You know, the one that slides below the radar of the mainstream media, for people like our readers, who want to see a little more. Thank you all for your loyalty and support.

Theresa McBryan



PETER GOLDRING
Member of Parliament
Edmonton East

ROBOCALLING FOR HARASSMENT IS A CRIME

On December 3, 2011, thousands of people in Fort McMurray received an automated phone call that showed on call display as coming from the private unlisted home phone number of Peter Goldring, Member of Parliament for Edmonton East. In the 90 minute period before Mr. Goldring departed to his function some 80 people returned the call, complaining they couldn't understand the muffled automated message they heard and asking why they had been called. The calls continued for days.

Mr. Goldring, preparing for an important function, was distracted by these sometimes angry callers, calling about something he knew nothing about. These "robocalls" were obviously the work of political opponents, intending to harass him. Most people seeing an unfamiliar number on call display or hearing a muffled automated message wouldn't bother returning a long-distance call from someone they didn't know. If the 150 returned calls represent five per cent of the total (a high estimate), then 3,000 fraudulent calls were made. It could easily have been more than 10,000.

Mr. Goldring reported the harassment to police, who are continuing their investigation into the crime.

"This sort of personal attack has no place in Canadian politics," Mr. Goldring says. "It's not merely unethical, it is also criminal."

The Criminal Code of Canada includes provisions for up to six months in jail and up to a \$5,000 fine for anyone convicted of making repeated harassing telephone calls.

"There's no doubt in my mind the intent was to harass me," Mr. Goldring states. "Whoever was behind this must have known that many people would return the call, especially since the robocall message was deliberately unintelligible."

We need to work together across all party lines to track down these criminals. These calls were not "dirty tricks" but serious business.

What do you think?

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Protecting children against sexual abuse



Abuse creates anger, the anger can be turned inwards where it turns into self hate and leads to depression, self punishment, loneliness and isolation. It also could turn outwards where the victims hurt others.

While we consider ourselves a moral and caring society we continue to have no voice when it comes to the protection of children. If we are passionate about protecting children, we will have to remain vigilant and ensure that our voice expressing our concerns is heard clearly and loudly. Every time a child is sexually molested, the issue becomes personal and we must not rest until the child is receiving understanding and protection.

While our justice system has led us to believe that the protection of our children is on full force, the sentences given to perverted and sick pedophiles and authors of child pornography fail to represent the seriousness of their crimes. Pedophiles are a breed of their own, who violate society's most cherished principles as they violate the most innocent and vulnerable members of our society. We need to be concerned about improving and protecting children's lives through harsher penalties, improvements in the law, justice and social services. It is also about improving our vigilance.

While the law is supposed to set rules for society, it is also supposed to be designed for the protection of the basic rights of freedoms and treat everyone equally. Crimes against children have become endemic and this is because deviant pedophiles know that the sentencing does not serve as a deterrent. If anything, the sentences only allow them to continue using our society as predatory grounds.

While the internet gives us worldly information it also serves as a way for predators to infiltrate into the lives of our young adults that use the computer and lack the knowledge and the protection to safeguard themselves against sites containing depraved material. These children/young adults are at the hands of despicable deviant people whose intent is to attract young victims making them participants in their deviant acts and encouraging them to engage their younger siblings in these deviant acts.

We must be aware that a pedophile will find ways to find access to children; this has been clear to us through all the deviant behaviors of priests molesting children, scout leaders molesting children, coaches molesting children, teachers molesting children. There is no a specific type or profession that pedophiles will seek, their sole interest is to find a place where they have access to children and they are not scrutinized. Unfortunately, this has been the case over and over again. There does not seem to be any place safe for our children any more, therefore we owe it to our children that we remain vigilant at all times.

As members of a moral and caring society we view pedophile tendencies and behavior

as repulsive, abnormal and criminal; at the same time we have to be aware that there are groups set that promote this kind of behavior which it makes it very dangerous for the safety of our children. These groups are all well known and established within our society yet numerous others are being created through the Internet. While there are laws governing the Internet, when pedophiles are caught more continue to take their place. The fact is that child predators live in our neighborhoods. They inflict unspeakable horrors upon their victims and leave the victims and their families with a lifetime of unbearable grief and suffering. The evil inflicted by these deviants affects all in our society, not just the victims.

At home we have to have a guardian eye for the programs that our children are accessing. If children have been abused; they might have the tendency to abuse a younger sibling, to gain power and control. One explanation for this is that children that have been abused feel powerless, neglected and insecure. The only time they feel a sense of power is when they are abusing a younger sibling. Sibling sexual abuse is more prevalent than most people would like to believe. In fact, it is the most accepted and ignored type of domestic violence. Because of the relationship of perpetrator and victim the abuse is rarely acknowledged or understood within the family. It is often hidden, minimized or denied. Perpetrators are frequently protected and shielded by parents and friends that want to be on the good side of the parent. By doing this, the victim is being neglected and not given the help he or she needs to deal with the effects of the abuse. Abuse creates anger, the anger can be turned inwards where it turns into self hate and leads to depression, self punishment, loneliness and isolation. It also could turn outwards where the victims hurt others.

Denial of this abuse only serves to reinforce the damage. The victim will have problems that may last a lifetime if they do not receive treatment. Don't wait for someone else to do the right thing or for some institutional "chain of command" to take care of it. If you won't be your child's advocate, who will?

And again, parents, if your child discloses abuse to you, YOU have a responsibility to tell! It is recommended that you do not confront the abuser but immediately call: The Child Abuse Hotline at: 1-800-387-5437 or visit the nearest community police station.

Maria B.

Woof's Miracle

Continued from page 6

and caring for him. Dad had given up hope that the use would ever return to Woof's hind legs. He told me of a dog he had seen, half-paralyzed, that travelled with its front paws while the back half was astride a tiny wagon with wheels. He would make Woof one of those when he regained the full strength of his forelegs. But, that was not good enough for me. Woof must walk, he must run with me again, I would not settle for anything less.

The first snow was starting to fall, softly speckling the dry, brown grass with white. Winter's early evening was descending upon us. Dad was going to move Woof into the house as the nights were colder now. He lifted Woof up, then for an instant let him



stand on his own. Woof was trembling with the effort; his body swayed ominously, but he was standing. He was standing alone!

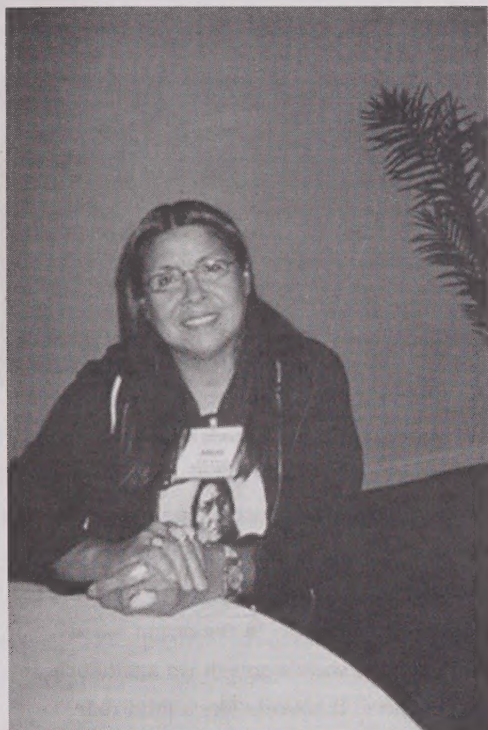
Two tiny streams of water were running down my Dad's cheeks. He said it was the snow stinging his eyes, for my dad never cried.

That was the beginning of my miracle. Woof slowly regained his strength and he was able to walk and then to run.

The following spring Woof and I were again running with sweet abandon, flinging our legs high and leaping through the tall marsh grass, our hearts singing like the choring frogs.

Vendor attends NASNA conference in Nashville

Part Three



I was asked by my customers, when I got home if I was able to tour and see some of Nashville's Music Row events. I told them that there wasn't much time even to find my way to a pharmacy store and then to find my way back to meet the others and get onto the bus to the next event. There were only about two to three hours of free time to wander in the evening to see some of the night life on the Music Row, then we were able to take the tour bus back to campus or get back on our own. I did meet another conference group in another unit the first night I arrived. The group was there on a conference on homelessness in their city. The NASNA conference participants weren't arriving until Thurs, October 13, 2011. I was more concerned about looking out for my own safety and getting back to the tour bus before departure and getting back to the campus at a reasonable time, than coming back on my own after midnight, especially in a strange

place. I had been to the U.S. for a longer time than on my trip to Nashville, when I was 16 years old and I went on a bus tour trip to Great Falls, Montana for a two-week camping trip.

The time spent at the conference was tightly scheduled, and on time so it was sometimes a relay run from one place to another. I think if I were to come back to Nashville I would be there for the purpose of taking in a few concerts, shopping and touring the museums and tour sights. I will also book a flight in advance. But this trip wasn't to see what the Nashville night life was about, but to be there for the 2011 NASNA Annual Conference. I want to end this conference story by thanking the following: NASNA for donating the Bursary/Scholarship for me to cover the costs of the registration and accommodation and the NASNA Board Members for accommodating me to stay an extra day, so I could make it to the conference on the scheduled day. Because of the Greyhound bus schedule, without the care and compassion of the NASNA board members it wouldn't have been possible for me to be there for the day of registration for the conference. I want to thank Linda Dumont (Managing Editor) for applying for the bursary scholarship and for paying for my passport so I was able to go to the conference. I need to thank my childhood friend, Miggs, in Saskatoon Sask. for her support in long distance calls to make my trip possible. Thanks to Bonnie Hoffman, who sent a donation of \$100.00 to ESN, towards the conference expenses. I want to thank my customer, John Gulak, for his caring support, acknowledgement and advice about going to Nashville, Tenn. I want to thank my friend, Susan, for her guidance in searching and printing the Greyhound bus schedule and her help in getting the passport application and for the lunchbag to take onto the Greyhound. I want to thank Louise (Aboriginal Community) for her support in helping me with the passport application process. Also there is another lady, who was a great help and support and her name is Cathie. She works in the Crescent Heights

Community here in Calgary. I also want to thank Mark Switzer, Owner of Carline Muffler/Switzer Automotive in Lethbridge Alberta, Canada, my mentor and business friend, who has shown his continued support and guidance in giving advice to do the right things, while planning this trip. Mark has been a proof reader for my stories. Whenever possible, he would find the time to do so. He has gone beyond the call of duty to find the time to help me, because he wants to support my gift in writing. Mark has been there for me every month for the past 10 years since I began writing for former Calgary Street Talk. It was a dream come true to just be able to see Nashville while going back and forth to the conference events. I also can't forget the NASNA participants I took pictures with and shared stories with. I was so touched with all the hugs and new friendships in meeting Sean Condon, Neal Lampi and Rick Barnes. I want to thank Neal, who had helped me to buy refreshments and snacks for the long journey home. Today I still feel influenced by these three gentlemen; their presence, gives me energy to be encouraged to continue to sell and write for the now Alberta Street News. Thank you for your strengths and encouraging words presented in the workshops. I'm looking forward to seeing all the participants in the next 2012 Annual NASNA Conference.

I was touched by everyone who took time to encourage and to support me in travelling and at the conference. You will all remain with me in my heart when I remember being in an unreal place I had never seen before - Nashville Tenn. I am so grateful for your gift of friendships from the participants who cared for me, sharing in conversation. I am carrying with me now the memories of the NASNA members each time someone from the public buys a paper and asks me what it was like to be in Nashville. I am hoping everyone got home safely and in good health and I hope to see you all soon at the next 2012 Annual NASNA Conference.

To be continued next issue
By Andie W. L.

Bags stolen

My 3 bags were stolen on Sunday, July 31, 4:30 p.m.

I stashed my bags on the ground behind the fence by the porch of vacant, brown house on the corner of 80 Ave. and 101 St. to take my very heavy load of bottles to the depot. When I came back all three of my bags were gone.

I went to the front gate of where two brothers live at 10065-80 Ave to ask about my bag and because the shorter, heavier one, John, was yelling from the back yard, "Call bylaw; I'm making a fire!". When I got to the gate, I saw all my bags with most of the contents on the sidewalk on the other side of the gate.

I phoned police, who told me not to say or do anything. (I now wish I would had not listened to the police. I should have jumped the fence to get my stuff before it disappeared). After an hour waiting for the police, one of the brothers hid my stuff. The shorter one, John, is the one I think took my stuff because he was the one talking against the homeless, acting irate, and walking by my stuff in the back yard. The taller one denied taking my stuff, but he sure didn't want to help me either. He threatened me with a golf club. John denied having my stuff, and said I imagined it in his yard.

The cops told me they couldn't search his

house. They said they believed me. They suggested that if the two brothers "find" my stuff, they could leave in on the porch of the vacant corner house, but after two nights, that hadn't happened. When I went to the house again, the tall brother yelled, "You are harassing my house," and the shorter one

McHUMOR.com by T. McCracken



yelled, "I'm being terrorized". The cops came a second time and said, "If we have to come here again, you are going to be arrested and charged with disturbing the peace!".

The stuff was:

1) A black worn out shoulder bag with my SIN # 634 271 1## engraved on the zippers and snaps and containing, two Hell's Angels paperbacks, a multi-coloured, including purple and pink bathing suit, my phone charger for my Wind/Samsung cell phone, a yellow cloth shopping bag with a two inch pile of my mail, including my T4 from Bee Clean and my TD bank statements, my video papers including my tool list and my video game list, two cloth shopping bags containing a grey pair of Value Village pants/shorts, \$12-\$13 that have removable legs, a Value Village ZZ top cassette tape, \$1, Value Village Bushnell binoculars, \$7, Two 10-paks of hand warmers and two toe warmers from Habitat for Humanity Restore, \$20, a three pack of wire brush drill bits from Restore, \$3, a full beer can and a two litre Sprite 1/2 full.

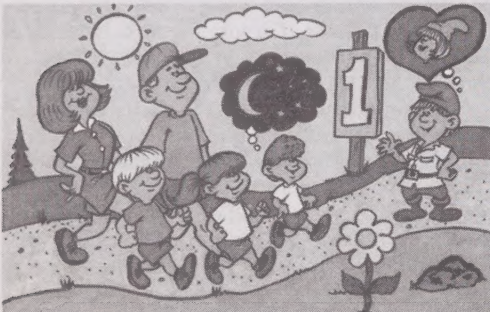
The total value of my property is about \$100, which John should pay since he gets a big AISH check. Alex, the English accented manager of Edmonton Bicycle Commuters next door, agreed to receive the stuff or payment for the stuff, so that this can be over. I have been a member of EBC for 20 years, so that won't be a problem.

By Captain Canuck

Rory's

First you must learn to count in a small amount

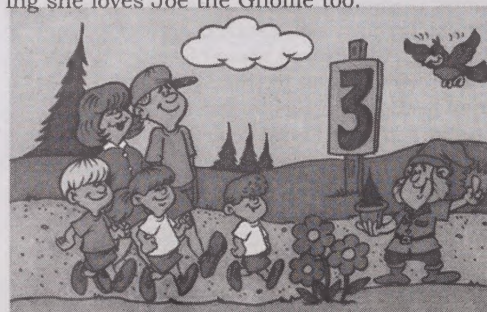
One day I went with my family to play in the park. It was in the daytime and not at night time when it is dark. The park is located in a small town named Stephenville, In the province of Labrador and Newfoundland, In the beautiful Canadian Nation, Where learning provides every Gnomette and Gnome inspiration



As we wobbled along my family and I met a dwarf man who was easy to understand. He said this to everybody including me. "Hi, my name is Joe Gnomian, a real happy Stephenville citizen. I am a boy dwarf known as a Gnome. You are at learning station number one. Did you know? My shirt is yellow. The same colour as the sun. Oh yeah! Ritaette is a lovely Gnomette."



We continued to walk along my family and I heard a voice humming a nice song. Then suddenly she spoke to my family, saying, "Hello. I am Ritaette. A girl dwarf called a Gnomette. Now you are at learning station number two. It is good to know our sky's colour is blue." Ritaette is secretly saying she loves Joe the Gnome too.



Our tribe strolled down the path a little further. With my best friends including my father, I just happened to see another dwarf that started speaking directly to me. He said, "Good morning and greetings. In every forest, baby trees grow from seedlings. My name is Billy. Now you are visiting me at learning station number three. You should also know, green is the colour of the sharp prickly, not tickly leaves of a pine tree."



When everyone finished hiking through the trees my mother asked, "Can everybody feel a nice cool breeze?" Then we approached Joycette, another nature loving Gnomette. Tee hee hee hee! She is saying, "I hope today you also get a chance to see the sea. Welcome to station number four. In the ocean when white capped wave's splash up against rocks on the shore, It sounds like a loud roar."



We followed the path once again into the trees walking and talking. I knew my sister was thinking about jogging. Suddenly, we saw another male dwarf who said quickly, "Hello my name is Peter Gnomian and you just did arrive to my learning station number five. In some trees working bees collect honey for their gray home called a beehive."

This is my world of Dwarfs



I am an entertainer who would like to perform at your Special Event as a strolling performer, stationary balloon artist or

busker. I portray three different characters: a Gnome called Roar Gnomian the Great Gaugnome, a Leprechaun named Sean "The Canadian" Leprechaun and a Robotic Robognome. Then with my unique voices I recite educational and comical rhyming stories or poetry to my audience while reshaping balloons for children. I am a storyteller, poet, comedian (I now use a recorder to perform adding musical inserts into several of my skits), and balloon artist.

I have performed in seven provinces across Canada, my writings and characters have been published, in these street newspapers, Alberta Street News, Edmonton, AB, Street Feat in Halifax, Nova Scotia; Calgary Street Talk in Calgary and Our Voice in Edmonton, Alberta. I have had articles and pictures in these newspapers: Beach's BIA News Letter, Toronto, On, The Advocate in Hillsburgh, Village Informer in St. George, Toronto's Snaps Magazine, Bradford West Gwillimbury Times Newspaper, The Life and



Stories



So my brother and I gave each other a high five, Then we walked at a fast pace to our next resting place. I waved to a Gnomette who said, "Greetings, I am Saraette. My hair is black and that is no secret. Everyone is now at learning station six. Did you know? When branches fall down from the trees they become sticks?"



After our short break my family once again had lots of energy. We were all having fun learning curiously. As our group moved along the footpath a little bit farther we met Kevin. Then he said, "Hi. Now you are all at learning station number seven. The colour brown is often found in the forest dirt, which is also called ground."



My dad proceeded on singing a song. It sounded like this; I owe, I owe. So off to work I must go. My mom quickly said, "Oh! Oh! What did you secretly buy you great guy?" He swiftly did reply, "Why a new car so we can travel on this island really far." Then we approached Bevette. She was a really happy flower picking Gnomette. She said, "Hello. Quite mellow, and I know and think that I love this flower's colour which is pink. Oh yeah! We are at station number eight. I realized walking is good exercise that makes my husband Randy feel great."



My family started picking up the pace so I looked at the time. Then we saw a friend of mine. He proudly and loudly spoke saying, "How are all of you? My name is Hermine. You have now reached my location, station number nine. My wife, the spice of my life, loves strolling and talking with me and we both love to see wild purple flowers that blossom in the summer after spring showers."



We continued to hike and our dad said, "I think it is time for lunch. Because! We all need food to be a healthy and positive bunch." Then I saw my sister's friend Tammyette. She is a red haired Gnomette. Who quickly and swiftly mentioned, "This is learning station number ten, my friend. I hope everybody enjoyed learning on our Dwarves nature trail. Did anyone notice any wildlife like birds, chipmunks or even the odd little snail?"

My mom gave Tammyette a nice smile, saying, "I like your style. Would you like to come to our house for dinner? It is good to teach dwarfs new things that makes you a winner. So we all did roam back to our home for lunch. We ate nutritious food discussing the numbers, colours and comparisons to nature that made us all a happy bunch. The end! Thank you and each and every one of you."

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Times, Los Angeles Times, Toronto's Metro, The Orangeville Banner and Orangeville Citizen, The Shield and Community Press in Stirling, The Toronto Sun, Hamilton Spectator, DundasStar News and Georgetown Independent Free Press in Ontario. The Western Star in Corner Brook and the Georgian in Stephenville, Newfoundland.

My characters were on a show in Oshawa about the 1st Annual Celtic Festival called Durham Living on Rogers Television Durham Region. I have appeared on these T.V. news stations in Canada, Oakville's Cogeco Cable, Global News, Rogers TV, City Pulse, CTV, CFTO, Channel 11, Channel 14, 2 and 7, CFCN, A Channel, SHAW Cable T.V. and C.B.C. In Ontario. Interviewed by these radio stations: 680NEWS Toronto, ON, 101.5, The Remedy, a Mohawk College Student Radio Station, Hamilton, Ontario and Country 93.3, numerous times in Fort McMurray, Alberta.

Rory Gaudon





Rob's last words

Have to remember that there are still some good hearted persons out there, just not enough of them looking for an Alberta Street News vendor on the street in Calgary. You may find them during the daytime hours, one on 7th Avenue and 89th Street SW, or one on 5th Avenue between 4th and 5th street SW and weekends at or near the Sunnyside Safeway's evenings. Also one over on or near 20th Avenue SW at 4th street. Myself, I am over by the Plaza Theatre on Kensington Road most evenings. Five vendors work in Calgary.

Personal View

I don't see much hope in ending the homeless problem here in Calgary, in Edmonton or in this country. I see a patch work of projects for affordable housing around the province and in other areas. What's missing is a national program, long term, to ease the problem of the lack of affordable housing.

Sometimes if you wish hard enough

dreams can come true.
Money is not the answer to all problems. I see way too much greed in the world today, especially locally.
My nearest hope, my nearest wish
That Alberta Street News will do well, especially here in Calgary because I feel now with this newly named street paper it has kind of picked up where the Calgary Street Talk left off.
That one Canadian hockey team will someday bring home the Stanley Cup back to Canada.

Rob's reason for not having a computer:

- 1. Potential for an evasion of privacy
- 2. Haven't the time
- 3. Still stuck in the 70s and 80s'
- 4. Haven't got the space
- 5. Can't really afford the extra cost
- 6. Afraid I may crash and burn
- 7. Paranoid of viruses
- 8. Haven't got the patience
- 9. Like my privacy too much
- 10. Have a hard enough time getting ready to go out and do my papers.

Keep water public – I drink tap water

Was a movie at the Plaza Theatre some months back, about January, I think, a docu-

mentary on the Alberta Tar Sands and what it is doing to some of the waterways up north. I didn't actually see it (the movie) but I wear two buttons, I firmly believe in – keep water public. I drink tap water.

The Stanley cup – do we have a shot?

Do we have a shot at bringing back the Stanley Cup to Canada? Last Canadian team to host the cup was back in 1996, some 16 years agChampioo. Doesn't really look like there Canadian team that has the talent to do it, maybe with the exception of the Vancouver Canucks, which was my favourite team in the 70s'.

Did you know?

Did you know that Albertans pay on average the highest electrical rates in the country according to a recent survey? Lorna and I pay on average \$40 to \$45 dollars and yet it went up to nearly \$80 back in February 2012, that's the regulated rate. Did you know that Calgary recently stated this program to end homelessness in the city yet I haven't see n or heard of too many holes being dug for too many apartments about any new affordable housing projects. By Robert Champion

